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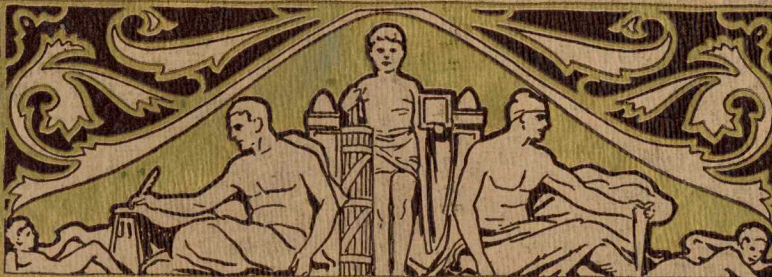
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Prosperity



Liberty



Wisdom



Authority



Music



Art

The Story of

The Memphis Auditorium





## Foreword

**T**HIS BOOKLET tells in brief the story of the Memphis Auditorium and Market House, from inception to completion, covering a fourteen-year period. The splendid structure as it stands today, with a seating capacity of 11,000, gives no hint of the sacrifice and toil on the part of those responsible for it. You will find on these pages the names of the progressive citizens whose civic pride and thought of better things for this community impelled them to labor unceasingly for the success of this great project. It was a work of love. The personnel of the Building Commission has changed during the years, but not one of those who served has received a dollar for the splendid service rendered, not one of them would have accepted financial remuneration had it been tendered. To the courage, the wisdom and loyalty of those whose names are mentioned herein, the City of Memphis and the County of Shelby owe a debt of gratitude which the people cheerfully acknowledge. Their work is done, and the magnificent structure stands as a silent testimonial to their vision and their integrity.

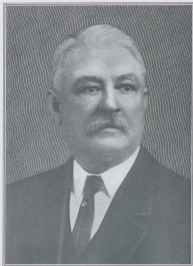
THE AUTHOR.

# *The Story of the Memphis Auditorium*

By  
J. C. CARUTHERS

1926

MEMPHIS AUDITORIUM AND  
MARKET HOUSE  
MEMPHIS, TENN.



JOHN T. WALSH  
*Chairman of the Auditorium and Market  
 House Building Commission*



## *The STORY of the* MEMPHIS AUDITORIUM



THE Memphis and Shelby County Auditorium and Market House is not the realization of a dream, as some have said. It is the fruition of years of planning and toiling by Memphians whose vision extended beyond the horizon of our yesterdays and swept the broad plains of today, envisaging the needs of tomorrow.

Since the phenomenal growth of Memphis in the early years of this century began to attract the notice of the outside world, the necessity of a great municipal auditorium has been apparent. Certain men of the class whose civic pride and thought of the future is largely responsible for the cultural and commercial prestige of this city today began calling attention to the fact more than fif-



THOS. C. ASHCROFT



H. B. LITTY



FRANK L. MONTEVIDEO



SCHUYLER PAYNE

*The Four Masters of Memphis Who Served as ex Officio Members  
of the Building Commission*



*Auditorium Viewed from Airplane*

teen years ago. At that time they set about creating a sentiment for the erection of such a building. Not for a moment did the objections encountered discourage them. They had faith in the city, in the citizens and in the ultimate triumph of the plan conceived in their minds.

It was in 1912 that the Memphis Business Men's Club (later known as the Chamber of Commerce) passed a resolution to the effect that the city's most urgent need was an auditorium capable of caring for great conventions and the staging of musical and other productions that local promoters desired to bring here for the edification and amusement of residents of Memphis and its vicinity.

At that time the state militia was flourishing, and it was proposed to have the auditorium plans provide for an armory that would take care of the needs of local military companies. The plans at this time, however, were only tentative, and the suggestion of an armory was later abandoned.

W. C. Duttlinger, then and later one of the strongest proponents of the auditorium scheme, was authorized to name a committee to lay the groundwork for the project, it being understood that Mr. Duttlinger was to act as chairman. A few weeks later Mr. Duttlinger announced the following committeemen:

R. R. Ellis, of the City Club, vice-chairman; John M. Tuther, of the Business Men's Club, secretary; W. G. Thomas, of the Merchants Exchange; George C. Ehemann, of the Lumbermen's Club; Rowlett Paine, of the Wholesale Merchants Association; Mrs. J. M. McCormack, of the Nineteenth Century Club; Mrs. E. B. Douglass, of the Beethoven Club; A. B. Bartholomew, of the Builders Exchange; L. D. Falls, of the Manufacturers Association; M. W. Connolly, of the News Scimitar; C. P. J. Mooney, of the Commercial Appeal; Harper Leach, of the Press; Roane Waring, of the Tennessee National Guard; S. M. Williamson, of the Real Estate Association.

The first meeting of this committee was held on December 12, 1912. Two of its members, Mr. Duttlinger and Mr. Ellis, were later selected by the Legislature as members of the present Auditorium and Market House Building Commission. Mr. Paine, in 1920, became a member of the Building Commission by virtue of his office, having been elected mayor of Memphis in November, 1919, taking his seat the following January.

During those years in which plans were taking shape for the building of an auditorium there was also on foot a movement to provide for a great central market house, that would bring together the county's producers and consumers, to the advantage of both.

Prominent among those who realized the benefits to city and county of a market house was John T. Walsh, who for more than a quarter of a century had taken a leading part in public affairs of Memphis and Shelby County.

In 1917, prior to passage of the legislative Market House and Auditorium enabling act, Mr. Walsh was pressing the market house question with the then mayor of Memphis, Thos. C. Ashcroft. Mr. Ashcroft was heartily in favor of both propositions, and it was he who suggested that the auditorium and market house projects be combined, and that the building proposed to be erected be so planned and constructed that it would take care of both enterprises.

The armory project had already been abandoned as impracticable, and the market house idea was eagerly seized upon. It was a happy solution of a vexing problem. The advantages that such an enterprise would offer to the farmers, truck growers, poultry raisers, dairy men, and other producers in the rural sections of the county were obvious. The undertaking was believed to be too big and expensive for the city to attempt alone. The cooperation and financial assistance of the county was needed, but the county must be convinced that the benefits to be derived would justify the expense that would necessarily be entailed. Provision for a great central community market house met with the approval of all, both within and without the city limits.

Thus it was that the bill drawn and presented to the state Legislature in 1917 was known as the Memphis and Shelby County Auditorium and Market House bill, making provision for a bond issue of \$750,000, divided equally between city and county.

The difficulties encountered by proponents of the huge building enterprise from 1912 to 1917 were many and varied. Enthusiasm on the part of those behind the project had run high following a monster mass meeting held in the Merchants Exchange on April 22, 1915. This was probably the first opportunity the people as a whole had been given to make a public expression of their approval. That the people were ready to get in behind the project was proven conclusively at that April meeting.

Enthusiasm alone, however, will not win battles. The sinews of war are necessary to prosecute war, and in big civic enterprises enthusiasm must have a financial backing. But this was assured when the auditorium proponents and the market house proponents merged the two propositions into one and thus united city and county in one splendid enterprise that would redound to the interests of both.

Victory was complete when the 1917 session of the Tennessee Legislature passed two bills providing for the erection and operation of an Auditorium and Market House by the County of Shelby and the City of Memphis. These enabling acts will be found in "The Private Acts of Tennessee, 1917," chapters 420 and 421, and known as Senate Bills 929 and 928.

These acts are practically identical in character, save that one confers authority on the County of Shelby and the other confers authority on the City of Memphis. The caption of Senate Bill 929,



W. C. DUTTLINGER  
*Member of the Building Commission*

which comprehensively summarizes the powers conferred, reads as follows:

"An Act to authorize the County of Shelby, in connection and by cooperation with the City of Memphis, to erect, own, maintain and operate an auditorium and public market house, and to issue bonds in a sum not exceeding three hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars, after a vote of the people at an election to be held as herein provided shall have authorized said bond issue, for the purposes above stated, and for the purpose of acquiring any lands necessary for such auditorium and public market; to designate the location of said auditorium and public market, and to authorize said county to use for that purpose any real estate belonging to said county; to appoint a commission known as the Auditorium and Market Building Commission to have charge and control of the erection of said auditorium and public market; to confer upon said County of Shelby and said commission the right to acquire any lands necessary for said auditorium and public market, and to authorize said county and said commission, severally and jointly, to acquire such lands by purchase or condemnation, to authorize said commission to make contracts and agreements with the City of Memphis in regard to the erection, maintenance, and operation of said auditorium and public market, consistent with the provisions of this Act; to authorize said county and commission to do all other things necessary on their part in connection with the erection and equipment of said auditorium and market; to provide for the selection of another commission, to be known as the Auditorium and Market Commission to have charge of the maintenance and operation of said auditorium and market after the same is completed, and to fix the terms of the members of said commission, the method of selection of their successors, and their powers and duties, and to authorize said county to levy and collect a tax for maintenance of said auditorium and market."



Both of these bills were passed on April 2, 1917, and were approved by Gov. Tom C. Rye on the following day. It was stipulated that each act should take effect "from and after its passage, the public welfare requiring it."

The Auditorium and Market Building Commission created by the two legislative acts was composed of John T. Walsh, R. R. Ellis, Henry C. Loeb, W. C. Duttlinger, and W. M. Allen, who were to serve until the work in hand was completed and the building turned over to the county and city. The chairman of the county court and the mayor of the city (whoever they might be at the time or in succeeding years) were named as ex officio members of the commission, and given all the rights and powers of the other five commissioners. Any vacancy on the commission occurring through death, resignation or failure to qualify or serve was to be filled by vote of the remaining members.

Of the five original members of the commission named by the legislative act, John T. Walsh, R. R. Ellis, and W. C. Duttlinger remained on the commission until the auditorium was completed. Mr. Loeb resigned in 1919, having removed from the city. Mr. Allen, who lived at Cordova, died in February, 1920. Four mayors and four county court chairmen have served as ex officio members. The mayors who by virtue of office have held membership were: T. C. Ashcroft, H. H. Litty, F. L. Monteverde, and Rowlett Paine. Mayor Paine has been an active member since he took his seat as chief executive of the city in January, 1920. Four county court chairmen have been ex officio members, as follows: T. T. McDonald, J. A. Heard, E. E. Strong, C. G. Gowen, the latter being on the commission when the auditorium was completed. Squire McDonald died April 23, 1923, after his term as chairman of the county court had expired.

I. D. Block, who was elected to succeed Mr. Loeb, resigned, has served on the commission since December of 1919. The vacancy caused by the death of Mr. Allen was not filled until February, 1922, for reasons mentioned further on in this article.

The first official meeting of the Auditorium and Market House Commission was held in the mayor's office on November 12, 1917. R. R. Ellis was elected chairman; J. T. Walsh, vice-chairman; W. C. Duttlinger, secretary. The election of each was unanimous. Some months later, Mr. Duttlinger resigned as secretary, and L. C. Humes was subsequently chosen to succeed him. The legislative

act creating the commission empowered it to name a secretary who was not a member of the commission, if it saw fit to do so, and provided a salary not to exceed \$1,800 annually for actual service. However, during the more than five years he served as secretary of the commission Mr. Humes refused to accept a dollar for his services.

This is illustrative of the spirit animating those who from 1917, when the Auditorium and Market Building Commission was created by the Legislature, to 1924, when the doors of the great auditorium were first opened to the public, served without remuneration, asking as their only reward the consciousness of a duty well performed and a trust sacredly kept.

At that first meeting of the commission in November, 1917, a committee was named to secure full data as to the private ownership of property in the block of ground on which the auditorium and market house was to be built. This block, comprising the territory lying between Exchange and Poplar Avenues on the north and south, and Main and Front Streets on the east and west, was the site of the old Shelby County Courthouse, which occupied about one-fourth of the total space. The city owned practically half the block, the municipal property facing west on Front Street. It was necessary to secure the remaining one-fourth of the ground needed by purchase or condemnation. In addition, the commission had to bargain for the cancellation of leases on part of the property. Including the property values, the Auditorium and Market House represents an investment of approximately \$2,000,000.

As is usually anticipated under such circumstances, there was annoying and delaying litigation before the commission found itself in undisputed ownership of the ground necessary. In the case of one litigant a supreme court decision was necessary, but in the end the commission came out victorious all along the line.

Just a few days after the first enabling acts providing for the \$750,000 joint city and county bond issue, the United States declared war against Germany. Prices, which had been advancing ever since the armed forces of Europe clashed on the battlefield, in 1914, now went upward by leaps and bounds. Long before the peak was reached building material was held at such a figure and the wage demands of labor were so high that it was obvious an additional bond issue would be necessary.

However, by this time the taxpayers of Memphis and Shelby County were so enthusiastically behind the project that no substan-





R. R. ELLES

*First Chairman of the Building Commission*



*Foundation Work on the Auditorium and Market House*

tial opposition was raised, and accordingly the Legislature of 1921 authorized a second bond issue by both city and county, in the sum of \$375,000 each, to be used in conjunction with and for the same purpose as the issue of like amount authorized in 1917.

This second issue made a total of \$1,500,000 secured through bond sales by city and county. These bonds were sold by city and county as needed by the Auditorium and Market House Building Commission in prosecuting the work on hand. The city commissioners and members of the county court showed commendable co-operation in the project by complying with the wishes of the building commission at all times in providing the money with which to carry on the work. The mayor of the city, the chairman of the county court and the city and county attorneys were ever willing to facilitate matters by exercising the authority vested in them and making effective the provisions of the enabling acts of 1917 and 1921.



Because of the war and the heavy demands made on the financial resources and man power of the nation, the federal government in 1917 requested that all big local enterprises in prospect be held in abeyance, so far as practicable, until the great inter-

national issue was settled. The patriotism of the building commission and officials of both city and county was evidenced by compliance with this request, as well as in every other conceivable way. For this reason actual construction was not contemplated until after the armistice. This explains the seeming inactivity during the years 1917, 1918, and 1919. The commission, however, went right ahead with the necessary preliminaries. During the entire time the city commission and the county court gave the building commission every encouragement, and through the mayor and county court chairman, ex officio members of the building commission, rendered every possible aid.

It was necessary, of course, that the building commission have on hand at all times sufficient working capital to meet the provisions of its contracts with the architect, engineers, building supply men and those engaged in the actual work of construction. These funds were wisely used as needed, while the reserve kept on hand following the first sale of bonds was placed on deposit to the best advantage. Accrued interest on moneys deposited amounted to more than \$100,000. This gave the building commission a total of more than \$1,600,000 with which to complete its work.

At a meeting of the commission on July 10, 1919, Charles O. Pfeil was officially named architect. The selection of Mr. Pfeil is but one instance of many that proves the caution and impartiality of the building commission in its dealings with those who were to be called upon to take part in erection of the great building that would meet the demands to be made upon it and the need for which had so long been apparent. The conditions laid down by the board in its selection of an architect are set forth elsewhere in this record.

Suffice it to say here that one of the first resolutions of the commission was that, insofar as possible and consonant with substantial results, in the awarding of contracts local concerns and individuals should be given preference. The commission



felt that, inasmuch as the taxpayers of this city and county were to bear the expense of the building, it was only just that the money to be spent should be spent at home. Mr. Pfeil had long been prominent in the professional life of this community, and his achievements in an architectural way had brought to him a reputation not confined to this immediate section. Shortly after his selection as architect, Mr. Pfeil and George Awsumb formed a partnership under the name of Pfeil & Awsumb, and Mr. Awsumb had a prominent part in drawing the plans of the Auditorium and Market House.

From July, 1919, to the present day Mr. Pfeil has been in continued conference with the building commission, taking an active part in its discussions and giving the members full benefit of his long years of experience in planning and building. From time to time it was absolutely necessary that plans be revised in order to keep the expenditures within the bounds of the limited resources.

The first plan submitted provided for quarters to be used by city officials and their subordinates. The enabling act did not stipulate that the building should include office space for the city government, but there was nothing in its provisions forbidding this, if the building commission saw fit to do so. It was the intention of the commission to have the city hall offices occupy that part of the auditorium building facing east on Main Street. This would have brought the building flush with the inner sidewalk curb.

However, before the architect's plans were finally agreed upon, it was ascertained that the funds available would not be sufficient to provide quarters for officials of the city, without detracting from the appearance and conveniences of the auditorium proper. The commission, therefore, abandoned the city hall plan and instructed the architect to revise his building plans in such a way that quarters for the city administration might be added in later years, if deemed advisable.



MAYOR ROWLETT PAINE  
*Ex Officio Member of the Building Commission*



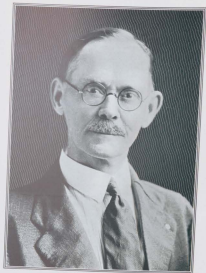
*Typical Scene in the Busy Market House*

This was done accordingly, and the space between the auditorium and Main Street on the east can readily be utilized for the purpose originally intended whenever it is decided to do so. However the open space extending the full length of the building on the east does not in any way detract from the appearance of the structure. To the contrary, in the opinion of many, it lends additional beauty to the imposing edifice.

From February, 1920, to February, 1922, following the death of Mr. Allen, there had been a vacancy on the commission. The election of Mr. E. W. Hale, who had been nominated at a meeting held in December, 1921, to succeed him, having been contested on certain technical grounds by some of the six commissioners.

At a meeting on February 10, 1922, Mr. Hale proved that his interest in the auditorium project was much greater than any mere personal ambition by stating that if the building commission would





SQUIRE C. G. GOWEN  
*Chairman of the Shelby County Court and ex Officio Member  
 of the Building Commission*



*Spacious Doorways Giving Entrance to the Auditorium*

get together on a man he would step aside, and that whenever such agreement was assured the commissioners could consider that his resignation was before them. Thereupon Vice-Chairman Walsh, seconded by Mayor Paine, nominated Secretary L. C. Humes, who for four years had served so efficiently as secretary, but with no voice in the deliberations of the body, and he was unanimously elected as the seventh member, by a rising vote.

This was the happy solution of a problem that had given the other six members of the commission grave concern. If there were grave discussions as to a successor to Squire Allen when the matter was brought up at intervals during the two years the vacancy existed, it was because the commissioners were so mindful of the trust reposed in them that they regarded as almost sacred the responsibilities assumed. At no time was there a question raised as to the integrity of any man whose name was presented, nor was there in



SQUIRE E. E. STRONG  
*Former County Court Chairman and an Office Member of the  
 Building Commission*



*Showing the Seating Capacity of the Mammoth Main Arena*

evidence any feeling of personal animosity. Those opposed to Mr. Hale's membership on the building commission were known to hold him in high personal esteem, and were liberal in their words of commendation for his unselfish act in withdrawing his name.

It might be well to emphasize here the fact that what is known as "political expediency" has never during the nine years' existence of the Auditorium and Market House Building Commission been permitted to inject itself into the deliberations of the organization. A resume of the years of arduous labor given to the great undertaking by those to whom it was commissioned will show that at all times each and every one having a voice in the commission's affairs has been zealous in guarding the trust and strong in his determination to carry out the provisions of the enabling act and give to city and county the best that the authorized expenditures could provide.

At the February meeting referred to attention was called to the



IKE D. BLOCK  
*Member of the Building Commission*



*Exhibit Space for Conventions*

provision of the enabling acts for the annual election of officers to guide the commission's activities. In the press of business confronting the commissioners this provision had been overlooked. Mr. Ellis had served as chairman since the first meeting of the commission in December, 1917, and Mr. Walsh as vice-chairman, although there had been several changes in the original personnel of the organization. In the reorganization following the election of Mr. Humes to membership, Mr. Walsh was elected chairman and Squire E. E. Strong vice-chairman. Mr. Walsh was reelected each year thereafter, holding the office until the Auditorium and Market House was completed and delivered into the hands of the operating commission named to take charge of it. Mr. Strong's term as county court chairman ended on December 31, 1923, and his connection with the building commission automatically ceased, C. G. Gowen, the new county court chairman, succeeding him as ex officio member.





L. C. HUMES (Deceased)  
Secretary and Member of the Building Commission

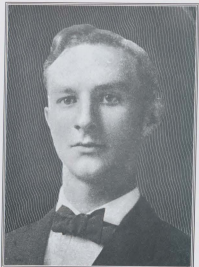


*A Glimpse of the Stage Showing Array of Drop Curtains*

Squire Gowen took his seat as a member of the commission at the meeting held on January 15, 1924, and was elected to succeed Squire Strong as vice-chairman. Mr. Humes, who had succeeded himself as secretary each year after election to membership, died on February 4, 1925. As the work of the commission was nearing the end at that time, the vacancy was not filled.

Incidentally, it is well to mention here that while the commission has handled more than \$1,600,000 during the years the building was in course of construction, so zealously has the trust been guarded that not one act of the commission has been called into question.

The first public gathering in the Auditorium was on June 3, 4, and 5, 1924. This was the occasion of the United Confederate Veterans' Reunion. While the building as a whole at this time lacked much of being completed, the work was so far advanced as to permit the main auditorium to be used as a meeting place. It was emi-



SQUIRE W. M. ALLEN (Deceased)  
*One of the Original Members of the Building Commission*



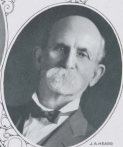
*Another View of the Stage with Main Arena Floor Cleared for Dancing*

nently fitting that the soldier veterans of the sixties, some of whom had followed that intrepid Memphis soldier, Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest, should be the first to assemble in the Auditorium, and it may be said to have been christened with the "rebel yell."

When the mammoth structure was practically completed, and the building commission realized that its labors were nearing the end, the mayor of Memphis and the chairman of the county court made known their selections for the operating commission, which should be charged with the duty of managing the affairs of the Auditorium and Market House. Mayor Paine named Joseph A. Fowler as chairman, E. R. Barrow, and L. C. Humes. County Court Chairman Gowen appointed John T. Walsh and I. D. Block. The legislative act stipulated that the mayor and county court chairman should be ex officio members of the operating commission, as well as of the building commission. After the death of L. C. Humes, in February



T.T. McDONALD



J.A. HEAD



E.E. STRONG



C.G. GORDON

*The Four Chairmen of the Shelby County Court Who Served as ex-Officio Members of the Building Commission*



*The Mirror-like Hardwood Floor of the Main Arena Viewed from the Stage*

of the following year, Mayor Paine named R. L. Jordan to succeed him.

The operating commission immediately elected C. A. McElravy as manager. Mr. McElravy was known to be most efficient in the line of duties pertaining to such managerial office, and was the unanimous choice of the commissioners.

The formal opening of the auditorium took place on October 17, 1924. It was an occasion that will live in the memory of all who were present. Two free concerts, one in the afternoon, one in the evening, by the world-famous bandmaster, John Phillip Sousa, had been arranged for. The dedicatory exercises were reserved for the evening concert.

When members of the great musical aggregation had seated themselves on the stage there was not a vacant seat in the mammoth





*Operating Commission and Manager of the Auditorium and Market House*



*One of the Spacious Corridors and Balcony Stairways*

amphitheater. Visitors had gathered from miles around, and every available space was filled. The appearance and bow of the graceful Sousa was the signal for an outburst of applause from the greatest gathering that Memphis had ever witnessed, but silence reigned when the director raised his baton and instruments of reed and string and brass responded in one magnificent harmony.

Following the band concert, George Morris, at that time president of the Memphis Chamber of Commerce, and on this occasion master of ceremonies, introduced Dr. C. H. Williamson, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, who delivered the invocation. Mr. Morris, in a speech remembered as a rare combination of humor and philosophy, gave credit to those to whom credit was due and presented the speakers—W. C. Duttlinger, John T. Walsh, Mayor Rowlett Paine, and County Court Chairman C. G. Gowen. On behalf of the building



*One of Several Special Committee Rooms—Note the Architectural Beauty*

commission, Mr. Walsh turned the Auditorium and Market House over to Mayor Paine for the city and Squire Gowen for the county. These two officials of city and county then delivered the building into the keeping of the operating commission, and Joseph Fowler, chairman of the newly created commission, accepted the responsibility in an eight-word speech, as follows: "Our actions will speak louder than our words."

Such, in brief, is the history of the conception, planning, building, and dedication of the Memphis Auditorium and Market House, an achievement accomplished after more than a decade of unselfish effort—a temple, in fact, that will stand as a monument to its builders and be the common gathering place of those living today and of generations as yet unborn.

U. S. PATENT OFFICE, U. S. A.



REGISTERED, U. S. A.

# SHANNON, REYNOLDS & BONE

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

MEMPHIS, TENN.

MEMPHIS, TENN.

REGISTERED, U. S. A.

April 3, 1906

Mr. J. T. Walsh, Chairman,  
Auditorium and Market House  
Building Commission,  
Memphis, Tennessee.

Dear Sir:

Pursuant to engagement we have audited the records of the Auditorium and Market House Building Commission for the period April 2, 1907 to April 3, 1906.

The appended statement of Receipts and Disbursements is a summary of the financial history of the building, and we hereby certify that the funds entrusted to the Building Commission have been entirely accounted for; all of the disbursements, which included no salary to any Commissioner or Secretary, being supported by proper vouchers.

The records show that \$1,500,000.00 par value of bonds were sold, and a net receipt, after paying the expenses of sale, of \$1,498,000.00 realized therefrom. It must be noted that the bonds were sold only as funds were needed for building purposes; so that, the people were protected from having to pay unnecessary bond interest.

The bonds which had the funds on deposit paid a total of over \$125,000.00 of interest on such amounts as were idle in their hands, and this, together with \$4,196.95 of small collections of rents, etc., was almost sufficient to pay the expenses incidental to building, including fire and other insurance, as well as the cost of purchasing property rights to the amount of \$125,000.00.

In the opinion of the auditors, the Auditorium and Market House Building Commissioners, having turned over the completed edifice to the Operating Commissioners, and having liquidated all of their known liabilities, are entitled to be honorably discharged by the Commissioners of the City of Memphis, and the Honorable County Court of Shelby County.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon, Reynolds & Bone.

*Shannon, Reynolds & Bone*  
Certified Public Accountants.

# Memphis Auditorium and Market House Building Commission

RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS  
TO APRIL 3, 1926

## Sources of Funds Expended

<i>Bonds Issued—</i>	
City of Memphis, Total . . . . .	\$ 750,000.00
County of Shelby . . . . .	750,000.00
	<hr/>
	\$1,500,000.00
<i>Less—</i>	
Expenses of Bond Elections, Etc. . . . .	5,105.83
	<hr/>
Net Proceeds of Bonds . . . . .	\$1,494,894.17

<i>Income—</i>	
Interest on Bank Balances . . . . .	\$ 120,189.30
Rents and Miscellaneous . . . . .	4,496.95
	<hr/>
Total Available Funds . . . . .	\$1,619,580.42

# Memphis Auditorium and Market House Building Commission

RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS  
TO APRIL 3, 1926

## Disbursements

<i>Made Through Office of C. O. Pfeil, Architect—</i>	
Jas. Alexander Construction Co. . . . .	\$ 856,893.11
Pritchard Bros., Plumbing . . . . .	47,764.00
Fischer Heating Co. . . . .	101,854.00
Newberry Electric Co. . . . .	78,335.00
Crew Engineering Co. . . . .	9,000.00
Fowler Electric Co. . . . .	2,200.00
Fred B. Young & Son . . . . .	178,442.17
Memphis Engineering & Supply Co. . . . .	16,373.70
Armstrong Cork Co. . . . .	10,921.00
Wm. E. Barnes, Inc. . . . .	11,027.00
Otis Elevator Co. . . . .	9,784.00
Chickasaw Machinery & Foundry Co. . . . .	22,250.00
Colotex Company . . . . .	14,900.00
Walter G. Warren Co. . . . .	18,500.00
C. Chamberlin . . . . .	70.00
Larsar Manufacturing Co. . . . .	1,150.00
	<hr/>
	\$1,379,463.98

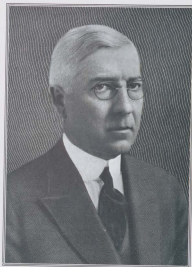
Architect's Commission, 5% . . . . .	\$68,971.20
Less Allowance on account of W. F. Schulz Engineering Co. . . . .	3,600.00
	<hr/>
	65,371.20

<i>Made Direct—</i>	
Wm. B. Ittner, Consulting Engineer . . . . .	250.00
W. F. Schulz Engineering Co., Supervision . . . . .	10,038.23
American Seating Co. . . . .	30,233.13
Readsboro Chair Co. . . . .	8,930.50
	<hr/>

Total Construction Cost . . . . . \$1,494,289.04

Cost of Land . . . . .	115,406.05
Necessary Expenses, including Insurance, Advertising for Bids, Etc. . . . .	9,885.33
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Total Cost of Land, Buildings, and Fixtures . . . . . \$1,619,580.42



C. O. PFEIL  
The Architect

## SELECTION OF ARCHITECT AND AWARDING OF CONTRACTS

December 26, 1918, the Auditorium and Market House Building Commission, in consultation with the Architects League of Memphis, appointed Mr. Wm. B. Ittner of St. Louis an architect of national reputation, to be the professional adviser, who would prepare a program of competition and conduct such a competition among the Memphis architects. Mr. Ittner prepared the program printed herewith, and after approval by the commission the same was submitted to the Memphis architects. All participants were allowed to have any other architects associated with them whom they might choose. Five architects submitted plans anonymously marked. These were submitted to the architectural adviser, who chose two other architects of note to be judges with himself and the commission. These men were: Mr. B. S. Fabbell of Cleveland and Mr. F. L. Packard of Cincinnati. This jury of experts viewed the drawings and later, meeting with the commission, voted unanimously for the drawings found to belong to Architect Charles O. Pfeil. The jury submitted a written report which had this to say of the winning design:

"The architectural design of the exterior of this set more nearly expresses the purpose of the building than any other submitted. The thought of using brick with stone or terra cotta trim seems in harmony with the spirit of the design. The exterior arcade on the north and south of the building will adequately perform the function suggested by the designer, but may, if lack of funds demand, be omitted without serious detriment to the architectural beauty and utility of the building. The essential facilities in this set seem adequate in number and well placed."

This report of the jury was signed by the experts and commission and in it Mr. Charles

O. Pfeil was named the architect for the building.

Shortly after the award of the commission to Mr. Pfeil he associated with himself, Mr. George Asanbath, architect of Chicago, who with him prepared the competition drawings.

The history of large auditoriums in America has been one of steady progress from the armory and amphitheater type of structure to the modern convention hall and opera house of today. The program for the Memphis Auditorium was an ambitious one, calling for a large convention hall seating about twelve thousand, with arrangement to be provided for converting it into an opera house of considerable size, with provision for a stage to accommodate the most elaborate company and scenic effects. The program further called for a market house and a city hall on the same site. A common monumental entrance and lobby to accommodate the auditorium and city hall was contemplated.

The market house was to occupy a space on the west side of the building approximately fifty-five by three hundred feet and to be separated by a solid wall from the auditorium.

The building was planned as above, but the city hall features were finally abandoned, due to lack of funds. The foundations and first floor slab of the city hall having been constructed, this space, approximately forty-five by three hundred feet, was turned into an outdoor terrace surrounded by a balustrade and approached by a broad flight of steps.

The first step toward actual building since the plans were decided upon was in September, 1920, when bids were called for to wreck the buildings on the site and remove all rubbish and materials that might interfere with excavations.

On January 3, 1922, complete bids were received from a large number of contractors all

over the country for the completion of the entire building. These bids were found to be for amounts exceeding the money available by about \$750,000.00, and were therefore rejected by the commission.

After much discussion, changing of plans, specifications, etc., it was found necessary to eliminate from the plans the city offices, the Exchange and Poplar Street arcades and various items of detail, which materially changed the character of the interior ornamentation. Bids were called for upon the plans and specifications as modified and most of the original contractors again submitted figures, the two lowest of whom were asked again to revise their bids according to some further slight changes. June 9, 1922, the revised bids were received and the general contract for the completion of the building according to the revised drawings was awarded.

Then the commission called upon Mr. Wm. B. Ittner, architect of St. Louis, professional advice, to come to Memphis and look over the revised plans and give his opinion as to whether they had been impaired by the changes made. Mr. Ittner made the following report on April 28, 1922:

"I have gone over the plans of the Auditorium-Market House, as prepared by Mr. Charles O. Piel and Mr. George A. Amsick, associated architects, and beg to report as follows:

"The changes proposed to be made in the plans and specifications, in order to bring the cost of the building within the appropriated amount will in no way affect unfavorably the use or the general architectural effect of the building.

"There has been no change in the general plan except to omit that portion of the building devoted to the city offices, and this it has been necessary to omit to remove the carrying-out of the Auditorium-Market House project within the amount of bond issue.

"There has been no change in the seating capacity, or those matters affecting the general safety and signs of the building, namely, its corridors, entrance, lobbies, circulation, stairways, exits, or structural

parts. The changes proposed are mainly in the interior finish and to its simplification.

"It is regretted, however, that it is felt necessary to eliminate the arcades on the Poplar and Exchange Avenues, and the architectural treatment of the chimney stack.

"An examination and comparison of the plans with the original competition drawings shows them to be developed in accordance therewith.

"In conclusion I am pleased to report that the plans have been carefully prepared and give every evidence of a thorough and painstaking study of all the elements involved in the structure."

At this time the matter of replacing the arcades on Exchange and Poplar Streets and other items of terra cotta, stone, and steel were discussed, and after considering various bids \$55,000.00 was awarded to the general contractor for certain items of work without which the architectural design of the exterior would have been sadly neglected.

During the progress of the work there were delays due to changes in plans and inability to meet the rising prices of labor and material with the amount of work necessary to have done. It may be said, however, that at the time it, which the general contracts were finally let, building costs were at their lowest ebb and at no other time would the commission have completed the work with funds available.

There was one serious disaster on April 3, 1924, when the cork insulation took fire in the Market House basement and before the partition wall between it and the auditorium had been completed. This might have resulted in a very serious loss had the fire not been brought under control when it was. The adjustment of fire losses was worked out satisfactorily between the insurance companies and the architects representing the commission.

Finally, when all contracts were completed and various small items necessary to the complete installation of equipment were ready, the building, including architects' commission, cost the City of Memphis and Shelby County \$1,494,289.04. This does not include the cost of land, attorneys' fees, and incidental expenses.

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION OF AUDITORIUM AND MARKET HOUSE

As told by GEORGE AWSUMBE, of Piel & Amsick, the Architects



THE Memphis Auditorium as it now stands is identical in all its principal features with the competition drawings, with the exception of features that were omitted to make it come within the limit of the available funds.

The plan comprises a large amphitheater, free from all obstructions, where all observers have an almost equally good view of the stage or arena. The general plan is a large open amphitheater, so arranged that it can have a stage near the center when wanted or be divided into two halls, one north and one south, giving three different seating capacities, which will be described in detail later.

The outside of this building measures two hundred by three hundred feet, exclusive of the market house and front terrace. The facade on Main Street is seventy-two feet high above the sidewalk, and those elevations on Exchange and Poplar Streets having gable ends are ninety-three feet high in the corner and slope off with the roof to seventy-two feet at each side. The interior plan of the auditorium logically determined the exposition of the corner elevations. Naturally, for the greatest seating capacity and best view such a design would have balconies and galleries which would build up from the arena in such a manner that a good view would be given, not only of the stage, but also of the arena itself, when large spectacles were presented. This meant that the rise of the balcony tiers of seats must be two steps at each level, which would naturally bring the outside tier of seats at a considerable height above the arena level. This worked out to be forty-two feet around the top of the balcony from the sidewalk level. This height might have been lowered if the plan had omitted the seats and boxes under the front of the balcony overhang, but it was thought more desirable to use the space in



George Amsick

that way because of the desirable seating space it afforded, located as it was at a height of several feet above the arena and stepped back. In that way space under the overhang of the balcony was used for seating, which would not have been desirable for arena space, as it would not have been visible to the majority of observers from above.

After the competition drawings had been accepted a further problem presented itself in making separate accommodations for the colored people in the Memphis population who might desire (and as the commission decided had a right to) a place in the Auditorium. This called for separate ticket offices, separate entrances and exits. This was a very difficult problem and one peculiar only to a Southern city, making necessary galleries above the upper line of the balcony. These galleries must be in either half when the building is divided into two parts. The north and south ends of the building were the most logical places for them, leaving the east and west sides free.

Because of the length of the rear of these galleries we were able to work the large windows necessary to light the amphitheater in day time between the upper level of the balcony and the under side of the galleries. These windows are the regular window height above the balcony, eight feet wide and fourteen feet high, with circular heads. The ceiling of the main amphitheater begins in a vault at the spring line of these circular windows and rises to a flat surface in the center, which is sixty-five feet above the arena floor level. The upper part of the window intersects this vaulting by means of a mirror vault, forming lanterns, which add materially to the attractiveness of the interior. This ceiling, with vaulted surface on all sides, is confined to slightly more than half of the entire ceiling area of the building, it being two hundred feet wide by



one hundred sixty feet north and south, the latter figure giving the location of the north wall of the stage house. The level space in the center of this ceiling is seventy-eight by one hundred and sixteen feet, surrounded by an ornamental member containing an open plaster grille for ventilation purposes and a plain surface covered with Celotex for acoustical purposes.

So far in this narrative the writer has described the large hall for convention purposes or exhibitions, which will seat eleven thousand without interviewing obstructions to the observer. The idea, however, was not only to have an amphitheater of such a size and capacity that it would handle the largest crowds, but also a theater or concert hall that would handle about two thousand five hundred people and be in itself a complete unit, with stage, orchestra pit, ticket office, exits, and all necessary and desirable requirements for an up-to-date theater. At the same time, the stage for this theater must be so arranged that it could serve equally well for a grand opera or other performance of like nature to the hall on the north side, which would have a seating capacity of about seven thousand.

The concert hall was planned to be one hundred and thirteen feet wide, which was considered to be the extreme width that would be usable in such a room. Its depth from stage to rear wall on first floor is sixty-seven feet, and from stage to outside wall in balcony is ninety-four feet, the intervening space below balcony at rear being occupied by foyer, corridors, lobbies, coat rooms, toilet rooms, and stairways. The space between the east and the west walls and outside walls is occupied by corridors, ramps, committee rooms and small audience halls up to the ceiling level.

The stage is forty-two feet wide by the entire width of the auditorium back to the arena wall behind the circle of boxes and seats, which is one hundred and thirty-five feet on the floor and one hundred and thirteen feet between the fronts of the balconies above, the latter being the actual width of the enclosed stage house.

Among the many peculiar problems of this building was the design and construction of this stage house. A stage house must be a fire proof structure, generally built of concrete or brick walls, be provided with gridiron arrangement for raising and lowering scenery and for hanging same when it is not needed on the stage. It must have a steel asbestos car-



tain to cover the entire stage opening which will automatically close in case of fire, and in an ordinary theater has a rear stage door for taking scenery in and out. Dressing rooms are generally arranged on either side of the stage.

It was found necessary to build the upper part of this stage house of structural steel with reinforced concrete upon the inside from a height forty-five feet above the arena floor to the roof of the building. This necessitated dropping the ceiling of the north hall at the point noted one hundred sixty feet from the Exchange Street wall, and designing that part of the building in a separate unit as a large auditorium for the giving of operas, lectures, etc., from the stage.

The stage house proper, then, is a solid concrete wall under a concrete roof one hundred and thirteen feet long by forty feet deep and forty-eight feet high at its highest point. This was ample height to install all machinery, gridirons, etc., for the hanging of asbestos curtains, scenes, etc. When the stage is in use from either hall, walls of special fire proof construction are let down by machinery from above, making a hollow wall below back up of steel and asbestos products, with a large air space between. When these walls are in place for a theatrical production the stage house is similar to that of any other theater, with the exception of the method of construction and the fact that the stage has a proscenium opening on either

side. The curtain openings are each seventy by thirty-two feet. The stage deep enough to receive one hundred and twenty lines of scenery, which is all that could be required in present day theatrical performances, an up-to-date opera company using only about eighty.

The stage house and openings are as large if not larger than any in the country. All of the first proof walls, etc., which go below the permanent stage house can be raised into the latter by means of motors located on the gridiron level, by the turning of a switch. The stage walls may be raised slowly in this manner in forty-five minutes. The stage may be lowered eight feet in ninety minutes; while a complete change from two halls with stage into a large amphitheater may be made in eight hours.

The large truss at the north side of stage house, which carries a large part of the load, has a span of two hundred feet and weighs sixteen hundred tons. All of the steel work in connection with the stage house is fire-proofed with hollow tile or concrete. The stage truss when in position is five feet above the arena floor and three feet above the floor of the concert hall. This stage is set on a series of screws which operate by rotors to raise or lower it to any desired height. When the stage is lowered to the arena floor and all walls are raised into the attic, a fire proof, collapsible ceiling is suspended over the opening of the stage house and below the hanging scenes, asbestos curtains, suspended walls and border lights. When this is done the auditorium is open for its entire length. The boxes, circle seats, and balcony seats continue south below and at each end of the stage house, so that the amphitheater is two hundred feet wide for a distance of two hundred and twenty feet from the north wall and one hundred and thirteen feet wide from this point on to the south wall.

At each side of the stage house above the balcony and on a level with the bottom of the permanent stage house—that is, forty-five feet above the arena floor—is a space forty-two feet wide by fifty-five feet long, designed to be used as an organ loft. There is also a connecting space eleven by one hundred and thirteen feet south of the stage house at this same level, which will be used in distributing the sounds from the two parts of the organ into the concert hall when the music is wanted there. The organ blowers and motors are all on this same level. Baffles will be used to direct the sound from the organ to either the north hall or the south hall, as desired. The organ was

not installed at the time the building was built, but is now being provided for.

Another very necessary feature of an auditorium which has full theatrical equipment is ample dressing room area. This is provided for in a unique way. On the stage floor level at either side are two star dressing rooms with private toilets, a stairway to the men's chorus room, a permanent electrical switchboard room in the basement, a stairway up to a miniature dressing room section and a door to the main corridor thirteen feet wide, into which auto trucks can be driven with scenery, equipment, and trunks. The larger pieces of scenery are brought in through the corner, north or south doors, as the case may be, to the back of the stage. The orchestra pit has the usual connection to men's chorus rooms and retiring rooms in the basement.

The dressing room sections on the remaining floor consist of twenty-two rooms, eleven on each side of the stage. They are arranged in a section each side of a central corridor, which has an exit at the north end into the ramp and at the south end into a large chorus room twenty-two by thirty-eight feet. These chorus rooms exit directly into stair lobbies and ramps at the south end of the building. The chorus rooms are also designed to be used as committee rooms for conventions, etc. The dressing rooms proper are provided with two continuous metal covered shelves, continuous mirror and lighting arrangement for three occupants, so that their total capacity is sixty-six individuals, which, with four star dressing rooms on stage level, makes a total capacity of seventy actors, besides the ample chorus rooms. A trunk lift is provided from main floor corridors to each dressing room section.

In place of the usual stage switchboard, a device known as the Major switchboard, which is attached to the main stage switchboard in the basement below stage, by flexible cables, in such a manner that it can be operated from either side of the stage or at any point desired.

The opening of the entire auditorium gives a space between the walls from north to south of two hundred and forty-four feet on the first floor and three hundred feet above the balconies. The width is one hundred and thirty-five feet between the walls on first floor and two hundred feet above the balcony. The seating capacity of this entire hall is eleven thousand people. When the stage is in place the north hall seats sixty-five hundred people

and the south hall or concert hall seats twenty-five hundred people. The space between the two halls which can not be used when the stage house is in use, including the seating of the stage, accommodates two thousand people when the stage house is removed.

The entire main floor, with the exception of the fixed seat space in the concert hall, is available for exhibitions. This space is ninety-eight by one hundred and seventy-five foot clear floor, which can be divided into booths giving an area for aisles and all of seventeen thousand and one hundred feet. To this may be added the boxes which surround the arena.

The arena has a lift of twenty-two by ten feet, for convenience in lowering materials that may be used on the main floor into the basement. An ample stairway has been provided to be set in this opening, for access to kitchen in basement on the occasion of serving large banquets, seating about twelve hundred people in the north hall, also for exhibitions.

The arena is arranged for water, electric power, and sewer connections when needed in exhibitions, and has a concrete floor. A wood floor in sections is arranged to be laid upon the level concrete floor for dances, gymnastic performances, etc. Another wood floor in sections is arranged to be laid with a slope, so that seats may be placed with better view of the stage for performances.

The arena leads directly into corridors on all sides and exits from them. There are one hundred and sixty feet in width of exits on three streets, twelve doors on Main Street, and sixty-four feet each on Poplar and Exchange Streets.

The corridor and exit system of the Auditorium has been designed so that no matter what part of the amphitheater a stranger might be in he would be able to find his way out easily. Beginning at the galleries, they exit directly into stairways at each end and continue to the ground level, with exit doors to the outside in all four cases. This separates the occupants of the galleries from the people in the other parts of the building. Ticket offices for galleries are located at these exits.

The main balconies exit into twenty-one corridors, equally distributed about the building, which empty from a continuous circulating corridor into six ramps and four stairways, all leading to the main corridor on the first floor and adjacent to the main exits. A widening of the circulating corridor at the north end forms a foyer under the balcony, with a stair-



way at each end and adjacent men's and women's retiring and toilet rooms. At the south end of building under the balcony is a beautiful foyer seventy-five feet long, twenty-four feet wide, and seventeen feet high. This room was designed to be used for suitable reception and committee room and for retiring between performances. It is designed with a mirror-valued ceiling in the type of the Italian Renaissance, and is a room that can be decorated with splendid effect. The floor is quarter-sawn oak laid in parquetry pattern, and the trim is gilded in American walnut finish. At each end of this room is a lobby leading to a handsome stairway, and a corridor surrounding it has access to the check rooms, ramps, toilets, etc., pertaining to the main balcony of the concert hall.

On the main floor there is a corridor system around the entire Auditorium which is thirteen feet wide on east and west and seventeen feet wide on north and south. Into this corridor all ramps and stairways (except from the galleries) lead. Six main ticket offices are located on the three street sides of this corridor, and all first floor check rooms, telephone and telegraph booths, etc., are placed along this corridor nearest the outside wall.

The Auditorium is well provided with facilities for holding conventions. Located at either side of the south hall on the fourth floor level are two assembly halls sixty-eight by thirty-seven feet with balcony, moving picture booth,

and stage and a seating capacity for each hall of four hundred. Below these assembly rooms are, first, two committee rooms, twenty-one by fifty-two feet, seating one hundred and eighty each, and below these two committee rooms twenty-one by forty-six feet, seating one hundred and fifty each. At the north end of auditorium on the second floor level are two committee rooms twenty-five by twenty-three feet, seating one hundred and twenty-five each, and two committee rooms twenty by twenty-two feet, seating seventy-five each.

The Poplar Avenue foyer used as a committee room will seat three hundred people. This makes a total of eleven large committee rooms in the auditorium. Elevator facilities are provided at the north end for access to the six assembly rooms located there.

The basement of the auditorium at the north and south ends is occupied by rest rooms, smoking rooms and toilet rooms, orchestra and chorus rooms, a large area for exhibition space north of the stage, with machinery and piano chambers for the ventilating system. The basement under the front terrace is used for carpenter shop and store rooms. The roof is spanned by thirteen trusses and the roof itself is made of concrete. The attic space between the suspended ceiling and the roof accommodates the air from the many vent openings in the ceiling.

The market house, west of the auditorium proper, occupies a space sixty by three hundred feet. It consists of a large central market with counters and aisles two hundred and ten by sixty feet by twenty-two feet high under trusses, and the north and south wings, which are each two stories high and forty-five by sixty feet in size. The lower story of the north wing is occupied by the freight elevator to basement, receiving room, and the fish market. The south wing is occupied by market counters for the purpose of light refreshments, candies, groceries, etc. The space over this wing furnishes offices for the Auditorium Market House Commission and the space over the north wing is used as a farmers rest room. The central area under the market is used as boiler room, engine room, transformer room, etc. The space to the north of this is divided into refrigerated storage rooms for use in connection with the market house. Ample toilet facilities are provided for all purposes in connection with the market house. The refrigerated rooms are twenty-four by twenty-five feet and eight in number.

Four of these rooms are maintained at just below freezing temperature and four are maintained just above freezing temperature. Facilities are provided for doubling the capacity of this cold storage space when it is found necessary.

Refrigeration coils are also provided in all meat, fish, butter, egg and poultry counters in the market above. These counters have a glassed-in section above and closed refrigerator chambers below to the floor. All counters are built with 3-inch cast Ternoite top and brick outside walls for permanency, and for sanitation a concrete floor is provided with core base at the bottom. Two suction tank ice machines provide the refrigeration for the above cold storage space and counters.

The design of the heating and ventilating system for such a complicated building as has been described was considerable of a task in view of the economy that was found necessary to complete the building with the funds available. The system finally worked out consists of seven fans for the entire auditorium, moving three hundred and thirty-seven thousand cubic feet of air per minute through the multiplicity of openings located everywhere about the building. Heated air is blown through the risers in balcony and through the balcony fronts as well as under balconies. This requires a total of two hundred and ten horse power for operation. Space is provided for machinery to manufacture power, should it be deemed advisable.

The ceilings of the auditorium and concert halls have open ventilators, allowing the air to escape through the ridge vents, which can be regulated.

Toilets and basement are ventilated by exhausting air from them at the rate of twenty-seven hundred cubic feet per minute. An air washer is provided for the concert hall in order to lower the temperature for summer use. Space has been provided for similar air washers for the north hall whenever it is deemed necessary to install them for summer use.

It requires three 250-horse power boilers to heat the building. The corridors, assembly halls, committee rooms, etc., are heated by direct radiation.

The electrical equipment of this building is naturally as well as with the requirements of a large structure, though some modern features and lighting effects originally designed had to be eliminated. The major switchboard mentioned

in connection with the stage controls the north hall, concert hall, and stage. It gives three complete changes of lighting on the stage by the operation of a single push-button switch. The stage is equipped with white, blue, and amber colored lighting, with full dimension control by individual circuits or grouped circuits.

All exit lighting and emergency lighting is on a special circuit of the local power company, which is never shut off unless electric power is shut down. In case of panic, should the electrician leave the switchboard with the audience in the dark, the manager, usher, or any other house-man, can light the main chandeliers in both north and south halls by push-button switch located in the outside corridors near the ticket office. A similar control is provided in picture booths, so that the operator may turn on and off his own house lights.

There are a total of thirty-four motors, with a total of four hundred and one horse power required. Of these, fourteen are required for the heating and ventilating, with a total of two hundred and thirty-seven horse power.

The operation of the stage, including the handling of the movable wall and motor generating sets for lighting and piano machines, requires eight motors and forty-four horse power. The other motors are used for refrigeration, elevators, organ and hot water circulating system.

A sprinkler system is provided for the stage house and all dressing room sections, thereby giving ample fire protection to that most hazardous portion of the building.

Perhaps the most important problem in connection with an auditorium from a public standpoint is that of acoustical design. The architects began studying this feature from the very inception of the design by determining on near as could be the interior form of the room and the materials of which they were to be built. When all had been done that could be done in the way of design in so large a room as this problem offered, it necessarily left much to be desired in the way of a good auditorium. This is primarily because the volume of the room is so great in proportion to the number of auditors, and further because in a fire proof building all materials are concrete, steel, brick, and cement plaster whose absorbing capacity is very slight. After studying the problem from all angles we rejected all acoustical materials on the market and selected Mr. W. S. Tricker, acoustical engineer, who was



at the time studying the possibilities of Celotex to supply the acoustical requirements for the building. The requirements of the large hall and the two halls separately were carefully figured and architectural designs made to fit the materials. Original designs for this work had to be changed, because at the time the drawings were made this new material was not available, nor had it been proposed as an acoustical material.

The commercial celotex is made from ground up sugar cane fiber with all pulp and vegetable matters removed. It is practically imperishable and when moulded into shape gives an excellent appearance, resembling life or stone. Mr. Tricker perforated machines for combining two sheets of this material and then drilling many small holes into the body of it. The celotex itself has a great absorbing power, but the material, with the improvements mentioned, became far more serviceable in a building of this character because of the many kinds of sounds it was required to take care of. The success of this material in this auditorium was one of the outstanding facts in acoustical engineering, and its use is now widespread throughout this country.

The exterior of the Auditorium and Market House was designed with the thought in mind that nothing but the greatest simplicity of design and purity of architectural style and detail could express a building so comprehensive in its scope. At the same time the thought of cost had to be kept in mind contin-

ually. The logical solution was a building in the style of the best period of the Italian Renaissance, when all the arts were at their best and when brick was used in connection with stone in a most artistic manner.

The commission was fortunate in being able to secure a brick at a reasonable price which at the same time had the color and texture necessary to give life to a large building and lift it above the commonplace. The plan and section of the building located the nine large circular head windows on each facade, with the exception of the rear, where one was omitted for the chimney. A blank wall with these large windows in the upper half was a logical expression of the interior plan. Smaller windows and entrances making up the balance of the design.

The Main Street facade, approached from a simple dignified terrace raised four steps above the street, and surrounded by a brick and stone balustrade, has a set-back of almost fifty feet, which gives it the necessary perspective. The three large entrances of stone are each twelve feet wide, with two doors respectively six feet by fifteen feet in size. These doors are purposely made large to be in scale with the building and to give dignity to the facade.

The doorways are enclosed by beautifully carved and moulded stone jambs, and above each pair of wood doors is a carved tympanum of stone, with inscriptions on the lintel of each. The south doorway has this inscription: "Erected by the people of the City of Memphis and the County of Shelby." The center doorway has inscribed on its lintel, "Public Auditorium," and the north doorway has inscribed, "Dedicated to the advancement of learning and the public good." In the carving above are the words, "Poetry," "Drama," "Lips," "Religion," "Music," "Art," "Philosophy," expressing the purpose of the building. The carving in each tympanum represents a large wreath, and below two horns of plenty overflowing with the fruit of the soil. Inside of the wreath the carving is different in each doorway. The north doorway has a shield with a book, on either side of which the above words are inscribed. The center doorway represents a child's figure with wings, holding aloft two black shields, one with history, good or bad, may be written. The south doorway has two erect forms, bearing up a decorated shield with the inscription below, "Labor for the fruit of the soil." Between the arches of the doorways and at each

side are four great shields, beautifully carved and draped with lions. The face of each shield has a collection of different musical instruments carved in its relief.

To the north and south of the center doorway, respectively, are three ornamental panels. These are of terra cotta. The first to the south presents the names of composers—Bach, Liszt, Handel, Mozart, Chopin, Wagner. The second panel presents the names of early poets—Homer, David, Virgil, Dante, Goethe, Milton. The third panel presents the names of other composers—Schumann, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Puccini, Gounod, Verdi. The first panel north of the center presents longwinded names, Longinus, Solon, Plato, Pericles, Socrates. The next represents the great architects, painters, and sculptors—Phidias, Praxiteles, Michelangelo, Leonardo, Raphael, Wren. The last panel presents the names of great dramatists—Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes, Shakespeare, Schiller.

Horizontal belt courses and rusticated brick wall between the grade and the cornice serve to keep the height of the building down and give it good proportions. Above the last belt course at the spring of the arches of the windows is a field of ornamental diaper pattern brick work, which sets off the beautifully modelled terra cotta cornice above.

The north and south ends of the building are similar. The lower story is principally terra, over which an arcade covering the entire sidewalk was designed to be built, but had to be left off because of lack of funds. The terra cotta arches now on the wall at these places are the part of the arcades which had to be built in with the building and therefore look somewhat incomplete at this time. The arcades will have free standing columns the same size as the pilasters now in place and a vaulted ceiling above corresponding to the arches.

Above the piers, between the nine large windows and placed in the field of diaper pattern brick, are ten large sculptured medallions of terra cotta on corbels of the two elevations, each five and one-half feet in diameter. The medallions were designed by the architects and modeled by an expert modeller, and are well worth the time of anyone who cares to examine them closely. In fact, the modeling of all the ornamentation on the cornice and other places is of an extraordinary high character in this building and adds materially to its artistic effect.

The story of each medallion, beginning at the west end of the south elevation, is as follows:

Number 1 represents the familiar idea of Justice and Equality with an angel of justice holding the scales and triangle, and below the words: "Justice" "Equality."

Number 2 represents two cherubim with laurel wreaths, and above the inscription: "Concord the sister."

Number 3 represents the cherubim in the act of giving his morning call, and the inscription, so very appropriate to the people of this country and city: "Sing unto God who has blessed us."

Number 4 represents the clasped hands with flowers, and above the inscription, "Fraternity."

Number 5 represents a quartette of cherubs in a cloud, with the inscription: "Praise the world with song."

Number 6 represents the Flying Pegasus leaping from the earth, with the inscription: "Fly towards the stars," and the interpretation let one's ideals and one's aims be above reproach.

Number 7 represents the husbandman with his cotton, grain, and lumber products.

Number 8 represents the eagle standing upon the foundation of the world's experience, represented by several volutes and a globe, crushing in his talons the heads of two serpents, representing the forces of evil, with the inscription: "In virtue there is strength."

Number 9 represents "Memphis." In the center of the picture is a youthful female figure with wings, representing the city of today; on the left the head of a patriarch expressive of the past; and on the right the head of a youth looking dreamily into the future. All are crowned with the laurel wreath. Below is the open book and the scroll, the latter representing the history that has been written, the former that which is yet to be.

Number 10, following Memphis, represents the character of its people and gives a suggestion of its industry, commerce, and location. In the foreground a lad plays upon pipes, while a light burns at his feet; in the middle distance, the Oak Tree, for our lumber industry; while beyond the river with its shipping and the setting sun suggesting our neighbor State. Over all, the motto which should be expressive of Memphis people: "Honesty good and true."

On the Exchange Street side of the building the panels, beginning at the east end, are as follows:

Number 1 represents the music of the sea and

winds, with the figure of Neptune holding a trident, while a Dolphin swims at his feet.

Number 2 represents the Art of Architecture, which can only be developed in a community as indicated by the inscription: "With labor and diligence." The medallion represents a model of a Greek temple and a hand holding a compass over a drawing.

Number 3 represents the product of mechanical labor and the farm in form of plenty, the governor and prison for industry, and the staff with serpents for the sciences. Below these symbols are the clasped hands, with the inscription, "National unity," and the letters "U. S.," typical of the harmony that should characterize our national life.

Number 4, lest we forget, the familiar figure with the scythe and below the hour glass, with the inscription: "There is a reaper whose name is Death."

Number 5 represents an innocent babe seated within the Greek letter typifying the end, Omega, and twined about which are two deadly serpents. This medallion is expressive of the truth that, from beginning to end, life is beset with evils and dangers of every description.

Number 6 represents the dignity of labor by the figure of a smith with his forge and anvil, and carries the inscription: "Labor has its own reward."

Number 7, with the inscription, "Knowledge is power," has an eagle with outspread wings and talons, over the center of which is placed a book and lamp.

Number 8, with a model of the Western hemisphere, represents the ship lines from the Mississippi Valley going to all parts of the world, with the inscription: "Commerce, Arctic to Antarctic."

Number 9, with the inscription, "Spirit of Coward," with hands supporting an anchor encircled with laurel branches.

Number 10 represents "Temper," or Time, with a wreath and a cycle.

The exterior of the market house was designed to meet the requirements of that feature in as direct a manner as possible, which accounts for the expression of the exterior being a long, well-lighted one-story room flanked on each end by two-story wings. The large chimney between the west wall of the auditorium and the market house was originally designed to be more ornamental, in keeping with the main building, but these features had to be eliminated.